

*'A distillation
of languor - the
river usually
a molasses-paced
affair and the
life around
it geared down
to an elegant
shuffle'*

*'One almost
imagines that the
peaceful silence
here has never
been broken
since the dawn
of Creation'*

FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE PAUMONOK TRAVELLER

OCTOBER 8, 1985

(an edition of seven)

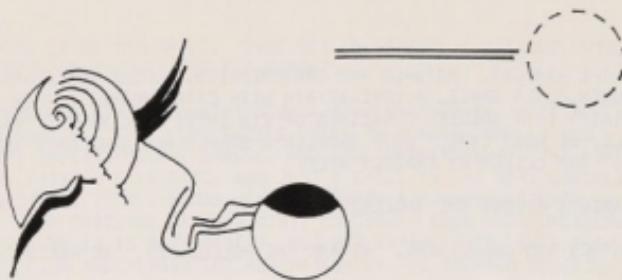
SOME DAYS ARE PERFECT. YOU RISE FROM YOUR BED BOUNCING, ON THE REBOUND FROM A WONDER-FILLED DREAM, REMEMBERED. THE DAYLIGHT IS CHARMED WITH CRISPNESS THAT CRACKLES AS YOU BLINK. YOUR FEET ARE LIGHT, AND YOUR FIRST STEP IS THE BEGINNING OF A DANCE. YOUR CHEST IS PULLED UPWARD BY BREATH, YOUR ARMS SPARKLE, AND YOUR EYES ARE WIDE. A BAND OF BIRDS OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW WHIRLS, SWOOPS, DISAPPEARS, CARRYING AWAY AND LEAVING BEHIND A MOMENT OF TIME, IMPRINTED IN EMPTYNESS. THE FRAGILITY OF AIR BOTH SWADDLES AND RELEASES YOU, GATHERS YOU IN AND TUGS YOU FORWARD IN A SINGLE MOTION. THERE IS A NAMELESS PARTNER PRESENT, TOWARDS WHOM YOU DIRECT ACKNOWLEDGING WORDS. WONDER AT THE PERFECT FIT, SURPRISE AT THE CURVED COMPLETENESS OF THE APPEARANCE OF THINGS. LAUGHTER AND JOY ARE RIPPLES IN A COMMON POOL ON WHICH YOU SEEM TO BE WALKING. YOU STAND STOCK-STILL, THE WORLD A CUP PLACED PRECISELY AT YOUR LIPS. INTERANIMATION.

| LIFE IS THE SUBTRACTION OF NON-ESSENTIALS. CAREFULLY.

YEARS AGO, WHEN I WAS ATTEMPTING TO CATALOGUE HOW MANY AND WHAT KINDS OF DAYS THERE WERE, AN OBJECTIVE SCALE OF SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCES PERHAPS, I LABELLED THIS KIND OF DAY "WHEATCHAFF" - JUST ENOUGH BREEZE TO SEPARATE THE WHEAT FROM THE CHAFF WITHOUT MAKING ME SNEEZE, A BLUE SKY WITH CUMULUS CLOUDS, TRANSPARENT BUBBLES OF AIR POPPING. THERE ARE OTHER SORTS OF ENTRANCING DAYS, MISTY, THE DELUGE, WINDSWEPT, BUT THIS ONE SEEMED TO HAVE AN INHERENT ELATION FACTOR WHICH SWEEPED ME INTO IT, FILLED ME WITH LONGING AND JOY. MY CATALOGUE WAS NEVER PINNED DOWN SUFFICIENTLY TO PROVIDE THE SEVEN-DAY MAP OF LIFE WHICH I WAS SURE UNDERLAY MY EXPERIENCE OF REALITY. ADDING AND SUBTRACTING.

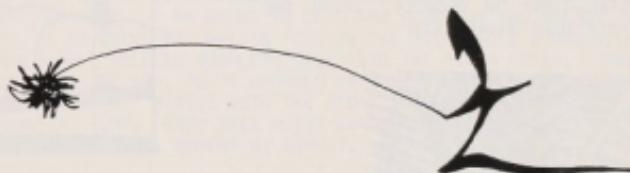
I AM CERTAIN THAT THERE IS A DAY OF DEPRESSION, ALMOST LIKE A DOUBLE DAY, IN WHICH ONE DWELLS IN A CONCAVITY OF PRESSURE AND HOPELESSNESS, TANGIBLE AND HEAVY. ONE'S EYES ROLL BACK INTO ONE'S HEAD, PEERING HELPLESSLY UPWARD, AS IF INTO THE UNDERSIDE, THE UNDERBOUND, OF THUNDER. ONE'S NECK IS PUSHED DOWNWARD INTO THE SHOULDER BLADES. GRAVITY AND ANGER. KNEES AND THIGHS BUCKLED. WALKING AS STAMPING. WALKING AS SHUFFLING, RAISING WHIRLPOOLS OF DUST EVEN FROM THE PAVEMENT. AND THE OCCASIONAL JERK AND KICK. LIKE BEING SHUT IN WITH ONE'S OWN WORST ENEMY, ONESELF. EVERY GESTURE A STAB. EVERY BLINK A CLANK. "GROUND" DAY, I THINK I CALLED IT. AN UNCOMFORTABLE FEELING OF ENDLESSNESS, NO EXIT, A SENSE OF SUBJECTIVE DOMINATION OF THE OBJECTIVE. SNARL. GRRR. LEAVE ME ALONE.





Brackets
OF COURSE, THERE IS SOMETHING UNABASHEDLY PATHETIC ABOUT PERFECTION. SOMETHING LIKE
A LOW HUM MODULATING THROUGH THE BACK OF ONE'S HEAD. SOMETHING WITH A LEER. *Brackets*

THE STREETS REVEAL TORMENTS OF THE AGED, THE INFIRM, AND THE MASS-AFFECTED INANE.
STAGES OF LIFE, CONDITIONS OF SOULS, ARE UNFOLDED IN A PASSING MOMENT COMING
WAVE UPON WAVE UPON WAVE TOWARD MY EYES. CLOUD CHAMBER AT FULL ACCELERATION.
BARELY TIME TO NAME THE COLLISIONS. LOCAL UNPREDICTABILITY IN COSMIC-SANCTIONED
ARRAY. MYSTERY AND MISERY.



THE TOOTHACHE, SURROUNDED BY THE TWENTIETH CENTURY! AN ATTENTION-CRABBER. AD-BIZ.
PRIMED TO BE A PISTOL. LAST NIGHT WENT TO SEE PINA BAUSCH TANZTHEATER WUPPERTAL
IN PERFORMANCE OF ARIEN. SPLENDID MADNESS DANCED IN FOUR INCHES OF WARMED WATER
TRUCKED IN FROM OUT-OF-STATE BECAUSE OF THE DROUGHT. ACTUALLY VERY LITTLE DANCING.
MAINLY WATER FROLICING, SPLASHING, SLIDING. SELF AS PLAYTHING. SELF AS OBJECT.
ATOMS IN A WATER CHAMBER. HUMOROUS COLLISIONS. WEAVING, DASHING, SLAPPING. WILD
PAINTED FACES. SEATED JUST BEHIND ANDY WARHOL, WHO CLAIMS FIVE MINUTES OF FAME.
LIKE AN OLD OLD ROOSTER IN WHITE MOP HEADDRESS AND RED-FRAMED SPECTACLES. HE, OF
ALL PEOPLE, LOOKING AT HIS WATCH. IT IS NOW 8:05 A.M.

Parade Alternative
I'M OFF TODAY BY TRAIN TO MEET WITH ERNEST AND MARION ROBSON IN PHILADELPHIA, THEN
ON TO THEIR HOME IN PARKER FORD TO DISCUSS ILLUSTRATING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY. THIRD MAN
INTO NAGASAKI AFTER THE BOMB, THE SECOND TOTALLY UNCONSCIONABLE BOMB SITE, MAKING
THE POINT. WORLD GASP IN WORLD GRASP. SCIENCE AND POLITICS. VICE VERSA.
VENGEANCE IS MINED, SAYETH THE TOY.

THIS IS YOUR
OPPORTUNITY
WHY NOT
EMBRACE IT?

in songbooks

FRUITS OF THE HARVEST. RITUALS AND EARTHREMAINS. WHOLE WORLD TRAVELLING TOGETHER THROUGH INNER-OUTER SPACE. A LOVE-AFFAIR WITH CATASTROPHE. IT IS TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR EQUANIMITY IN A SPECIES CONSCIOUS OF ITS INEVITABLE DEATH. EACH PERSON'S LIFE IS A GAMBLE. WE MUST EXPECT BOTH GAMBLER'S STAKES AND GAMBLER'S MIND. POSSESSION AND BLUFF. TOO CLEVER BY EXACTLY HALF!

TO THE DIARISTS BELONG THE SPOILS.

NURSERY RHYMES AND ONE-LINERS. WE ARE THE HOLLOW MEN. WE ARE THE STRAW MEN.

BALANCE OF THE MAIL AND THE REMAIL. WEBWORKING. SPIDERY MIND. DUN ENTRANCER. BEYOND MEANING. IS THE CURVATURE OF FAITH. GO FOR SOUND.

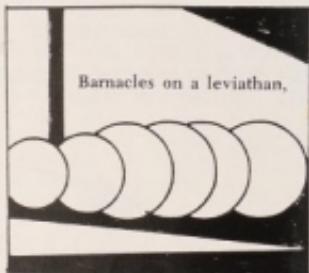
I HEREBY REQUEST THAT YOU CONTINUE TO WRITE.

WIND SHEER.

WE ARE WRAPPED IN TONGUES, LIKE FINE CIGARS. THE MYSTERIES OF THE SMOKE. WISPS OF DEVOLUTION.

AH, HORROR IS A REVOLVING DOOR, LUST IS A SPINNING WHEEL. AH. MEANING, AS WE HAVE SO OFTEN NOTED, IS SUPRASEGMENTAL. MAN THE DECODER. WOMAN THE ENFOLDER. HEY! SLOW DOWN! STOP!

CARRIAGE RETURN...



STRETCH OUT; REACH OUT; HOLD ON

A SNARL OF TAPROOTS, I MEAN, A TANGLE OF TAPROOTS, I MEAN, DOWN BELOW WHERE SUSTENANCE STEAMS THE ROOTS ARE CHOKING ONE ANOTHER, JUST LIKE MEN, CHOKING ONE ANOTHER JUST LIKE IDEAS. OPEN SESAME SEEDS.

TRY TRUST. OR, TRUST ON TRIAL!

NO OBJECT IS IMMOVABLE. JUST THE OPPOSITE.

CURIOSITY IS A WILL TO POWER.
HUMILITY IS A WILL TO POWER.
LAUGHTER IS A POWER TO WILL.

THIS WILL BE KNOWN AS THE CENTURY OF REMONSTRANCE.

VARIATIONS IN EDGewise

TO A BURNED CRISP!



EXACTLY! THE DEAL IS ON THE TABLE. ONCE SET IN MOTION, CONTINUES UNTIL, WHOLE CLOTH. COMPLETELY SUNNY FOR THE MOMENT.

YESTERDAY WE TRAVELED TO THE COUNTRY DOWN A ROAD ENCASED IN TREES BEGINNING TO CHANGE COLOR SUBTLY FROM LUMINESCENT GREEN TO SOMBER PURPLES AND FLASHES OF BRIGHT BRIGHT YELLOW, ORANGE, AND RED. MAGNIFICENT! THE MOMENTS BEFORE BARENESS, PAINTER'S PALETTE. AND JUST A CHILL IN THE AIR, CRACKLING EDGES. THEN FOOTFALLS IN THE WOODS WENDING TOWARD A RUSHING WATERFALL. AH! THIS SPECTACLE, WITH DAZZLING RAINBOW MIST, CONTINUES EVEN WHEN UNOBSERVED, EVEN WHEN THE TOLL-TAKER IS NOT PRESENT, NOT YET ESTABLISHED. SUCH RUSH, SUCH POWER, SUCH SLOW AND PERSISTENT ALTERATION OF THE ROCKBED BEHIND.

Carved passage



to a priest (ring the bell in the nave) and ask own the underground discoveries. The desc always comfortable. A certain amount of g is involved, and you have to watch or

see 47
I AM GOING OVER THE BRINK, GLISTENING IN THE SUNLIGHT. I AM BOUND FOR TURMOIL AND SWIRL, THEN FOR MIST. I AM GOING TO LEAP AND FLOAT ON THE ENERGY OF MY OWN PASSAGE. I AM GOING TO COME TO REST ON THE ROCK WALLS SURROUNDING THE GORGE, THEN SLOWLY ROLL IN DROPLETS BACK INTO THE RIVER AGAIN. TRAVEL EVER DOWNWARD TOWARD THE SEA, TO BE CHURNED UP BY PASSING PLEASURE-STEAMERS. CASUAL, STARK, AND BROAD. MIXING WITH THE TIDAL SURGE. FROM BUBBLING LAUGHTER TO POUNDING SURF. FROM THIS POINT EXACTLY OUTWARD, AT WHATEVER DEPTH MAY HAPPEN TO BE MINE. MOMENT BY MOMENT. UNOBSERVED & SWELL.

JUST WALKED OVER TO THE NEXT PART OF PAUMONOCK - IT SEEMS TO BE A CONTINUOUS PLACE - TO PICK UP MY TEN COPIES OF THE FOURTH FOLDING CIGAR FROM ROGER. THE BEST ISSUE YET, PERFECT BOUND. MIXTURE OF OLD AND NEW ARTISTS AND POETS. AH, WHAT COULDN'T WE DO IF WE HAD A BIT OF FOLDING MONEY TO LAY ON THE DOTTED LINES! PERHAPS A FEW THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR TO SPEND ON PUBLICATION - PUTTING TOGETHER THE 1985 JOURNAL OF THE PAUMONOCK TRAVELLER IN A SNAZZY *attractive, exciting* EDITION. THEN ON TOWARD THE WHOLE LIFE AND LOVE SONGS OF P.T. INSTEAD, I SIT HERE POURING OUT MORE AND MORE SAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE AND SENDING IT ALL AWAY TO THE CHOSEN FEW READERS. SPREADING ENERGY INSTEAD OF PRODUCTS. OPERATING JUST BEHIND THE DISCERNIBLE SURFACE. THE UNDERWATER CURRENT.

ses Mich
llica nee
loor take
ertine m
ing had
ne ancie
t of the
cavation
t every
n Vincen
. Some
oss sect

nd to ge
urists s
portico
e excava
curiosity



scoll, the
do's "Mos
new paveme
be replac
and there
ry far, the
ains; and
med into
ent on for
ing in the he
ult over la
his disma
man histo
in their ha
the bus as
st the littl
arch that r
sitors with



Never Call It The Subway

STRETCHING FORTH INTO OUTERSPACE. WHERE OTHERS ARE. REFLECTIONS OF THE DYNAMIC INTERCHANGING OF WHATEVER. LAYING BARE THE SOUL SPOILS. EACH IN EACH OUT. BETWEEN US AN UNDERSTANDING, LOCKED IN THE EMBRACE OF TIME. SENSUAL CONSCIOUSNESS. ONLY WITH MY HANDS' EYES CAN I SEE YOU. DEFINE A NARROW TRACK AND PROCEED WITH CAUTION AND DELIGHT. PULLING OUT LIFE BY ITS IMAGINATION. BY THE VERY SCRUFF² OF ITS POSSIBILITIES. BEING BARELY ENFOLDED. CRUSTAL EMERGENCY OR, EMERGING THROUGH THE CRUST ITSELF. VENTURING INFORTH. VENTURING FORTHWITH. WORDS AS PROBES. WORDS AS PRAYER. WORDS AS BLESSINGS. WORDS AS MAGIC. WORDS AS MAGIC. WORDS AS MUTUAL SATISFACTION. DARTS. SURPRISES. HOPES AND FEARS. EACH AH ZAP. (ZAP).

WE SHALL MEET IN ARTORGASM SPACE ALOUD. SSSHH. HUSH. EXPERIENCE THE SILENT SURGE AND SWARM. LOCKED IN EMBRACE. CONFINING HIMSELF EVER MORE STRICTLY TO A LATENT AUDIENCE. PLUNGE INTO AND EMERGE COVERED WITH LOVNETTLES, LOVEPETALS, MUSES OF NECTAR. BZZZZ. ZAP. Z(A)P.

UNDER THE BOCHI TREE BRAZEN, THE ARTIST, PLEDGED TO STAY UNTIL ALL FANCIES, BOTH SWEET AND SOUR, VANISHED INTO THEIR OWN ARISING. SURGE UPON URGE, URGENCY UPON REPLY, PLAY UPON REPLAY. DALLIANCE ENFOLDS. THEN UNFOLDS. BREATH SHARPLY INTO AND SUCK QOZE JUICES LAUGHTER LIGHT SURPRISE WARM CHARM ACASP WIT TONGUE TOE CURL

LIKE A STRINGED INSTRUMENT AWAITING PLUCKING PATIENTLY.



ALL IN FUN, ALL IN DESPERATION, ALL YES, ZAP, ALL YES. THE BODY BREATHES AND THE TONGUE CAVORTS, PLAYERS IN PLAYTIME TOGETHER BARE, ATTRACTION, SUCCESSION, REPLETION, AND REPLY, FRAGILE THROUGH THE AIRMALES THEIR SISTER EMBRACE; THROUGH THE FEMALES THEIR BROTHER EMBRACE THE WAVES DANCE NOTES SPARKLE, PLARDENT TONGUE AUAH ZAP

KINDLY SEAL. KINDLY SAIL. KINDLY MAIL. ZIP AND WONDER.
FROM THE BREASTBONE OUT, I REMAIN YOURS, THE CORRESPONDANCE WORKWEAVER WEBFORM.

Another Roadblock for a Dreamer

AH, ONCE AGAIN. PINA BRUSCHI LAST NIGHT WENT TO SEE GEBIGRE DANCED, THAT IS RUN AND TUMBLED IN TWO TONS OF LOOSE DIRT. BODIES IN COLLISION. HARSH AND WIDE OPEN. SHE CHOREOGRAPHS A SPLENDID COMPANY. TERRIFYING INDEED. PAINFUL AND ALIVE. SUCH A STRANGE CONTRAST TO THE NEWS WHICH TODAY WALLOWS IN MISGUIDED INTERVIEWS WITH THE AMERICAN FAMILIES OF THE LATEST HOSTAGE EVENT. BACKED UP WITH DEATH BY MUDSLIDE IN PUERTO RICO. THERE IS SOMETHING SO INHERENTLY CORRUPT IN THE TRANSMISSION OF THE DAILY PLANETARY EVENTS - EVERYTHING IS SCALED, SCORED, TO THE SAME MUSIC. THE NEWS IS AN ATTEMPT AT THE DRAMATIC LAID UPON A BACKGROUND OF MEANINGLESSNESS. WE HAVE ALL BECOME VICTIMS OF FALSE SENSIBILITY. THE LIES ARE SO LARGE AND ALL-ENCOMPASSING, NOTHING REALLY MATTERS. EVERYTHING IS VIEWED WITH IDEOLOGICAL EYES. EVERYTHING, FOR THAT MATTER, IS MERE CRIST ON WHICH TO HANG THE MEAT OF ADVERTISEMENT. "IF YOU ARE NOT DEAD YET, BUY THIS, THAT, OR THE OTHER. ON YOUR WAY TO WRITING A CHECK OUT FOR THE SUFFERING VICTIMS OF WHATEVER IS PICTURED HERE, GET A BIT OF HAPPINESS BY OWNING YOUR OWN STEREO, COMPUTER, DIAMOND BRACELET, ETC." "GO TO WORK TODAY AND SEE IF YOU CAN EARN ENOUGH MONEY TO BE ALLOWED TO BE VICTIM OF THE LATEST ADVANCE IN MEDICAL HYPOCRISY." "BE A STATISTIC."

ON THE FAULT LINE

THE GAME. THE GAME. WE ARE SO LIKE BUTTERFLIES, HAVING OUR WINGS PAINTED ANEW EACH DAY WITH THE LATEST COLOR AND FLYING THE DREAMY PATHWAYS OF INNATURITY MARKED BY SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY SMEARS OF PURPOSE. IT IS BEST TO TUNE OUT. RETURN TO THE PRIVATE. OCCASIONALLY, SOMETHING NEARLY GENUINE, LIKE THE PINA BRUSCH PARADE, BREAKS THROUGH ITS ATTENDANT SENTENTIOUSNESS IN PRINT TO BE, FOR A MOMENT, ALMOST HUMANE, EVEN AS IT PICTURES THE RAW STIFLING AND CALLOUSNESS OF RELATIONSHIPS. SUICIDE, WE ARE TOLD IN TODAY'S PAPER, IS CAUSED BY A CHEMICAL IMBALANCE, WHICH DOCTORS ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF MONEY-MAKING CAN INJECT YOU AGAINST. THE ONGOING DRONE OF DEAD FEELINGLESSNESS OF CONTEMPORARY LIFE AND INFORMATION IS NEVER ACCUSED, EXCEPT IN EQUALLY BLIND AND INSENSITIVE POLITICAL MUMBO-JUMBO. WHERE IS A SANE MAN TO STAND. WHERE IS HONESTY TO BE FOUND. AROUND ONE PEOPLE ARE DYING FROM LANGUAGE USED AS DEVILRY.

AND THEN PEOPLE ALONG THE NETWORK WONDER WHY MY PROSE IS SO DENSE AND ENSNARLED, WHY THE VERY ACT OF WRITING HAS BECOME A BATTLE, AS IF I WERE CHOPPY MEANING INTO UNGRASPABLE PIECES WHICH THEY MUST STRUGGLE TO MAKE INTO SENSE. THERE IS NO SENSE EXCEPT INDIVIDUAL HUMS AND AHS AND GRUNTS. THERE IS NO DESIGN TO SAVE US FROM OURSELVES. BRAZEN, THE ARTIST, IS A REMINDER THAT EVERYTHING IN THE COMMON DOMAIN HAS BEEN REDUCED TO STUPIDITY. STUPID ENOUGH, IN FACT, TO DENY ONE THE ESCAPE INTO DESPAIR. THIS IS THE SLAPSTICK STAGE OF HISTORY. THE PILOT IS SIMPLY TO KEEP MOVING, ALMOST BREATHLESSLY. BAH. HUMBUG. HUMANITY. IGNORANCE IS BLISS. IGNORANCE IS INFORMATION. WHEN, FINALLY, EVERYONE'S HEAD IS BURIED IN THE SAND, HIDING.

AGAINST THE GRAIN.

Gorge Profonde



OCTOBER 9, 1965

DEAR WALLY,

I have written so much lately about mail-art that I am rather conflicted by the thought of re-addressing the question. BUT, here goes once again:

The artist, yclept Brazen, is a daily response mechanism, twitching organism. He/she makes a work of art to satisfy the immediate emotional strain of being - in the process of clarifying or 'objectifying' the feeling, something in time concretely appears. The mail-artist, rather than aiming such clarifying either toward him/herself or toward a marketplace, aims it directly toward a 'like-minded' fellow artist. Thus the work is aimed into the intervening space which both creator and creator-recepient use (accept grace from) as a continuum of stability, i.e., somewhere a tree falls in a forest and it is always heard; the hearing is authenticated by the artist-maker and by the artist-receiver. The media of the mail-artist is the transmission between; that is, the canvas is actually and really the sending. Thus the making of mail-art is not finished until the piece of work is received. If the work is then reflected back from the recipient to the sender then the original work remains open until the energy and understanding halts for whatever reason - The work of mail-artists is conspicuously ephemeral. It is a work made in a communicative process, though only the ends are visible. It resembles, thus, a description of love, an interaction. Never has art been so concentrated in private hands as in mail-art. It is the working process of a far-flung, disparate (perhaps desperate) community. Pause.

The advent of mail-art shows is a back-formation having nothing to do with the actual interest, purpose, or inspiration of mail-art. Only in those exceptional cases when mail-art shows are educationally directed toward the general art public as a slap-in-the-face to the cooptation of galleries and museums and foundations are they working for any useful purpose at all. Otherwise they are a noisome confusion to mail-artists who misguidedly believe that that somehow this is the latest fad or bandwagon to which they wish to hitch their star. The underground reality of communicative exchange, however, will outlast this momentary diversion, simply because the true agony of our time has generated the phenomenon of mail-art - that is, most creative people are necessarily outside the traditional (albeit a short tradition) means of artistic success and reward. We are like quilt-makers, and our scope, responsibility, and victory is local. Scale. In an age of mass-media control, freedom for the artist as for everyone else lies precisely in the personal and private. If one can continue to be a mail-art over the long-haul to the ashes of the twentieth century, then the work itself will blossom out and do some concrete social good. The enemy (that is, the cultural enemy) is so large that only a broad-based, broad-scoped interweaving artform will be LOUD enough to be heard both inside and outside the usually precious quarters of ART (which is clearly now in capture). That is, it will show that beneath what appears as history, the real human interaction, common sense, and delight did indeed make the world go round.

Mail-art is consciousness of liberation by example. In the long run, liberation movements will move together precisely because of the experience of tolerance which is at the heart of all interhuman activities. We are participating in a participative process in which, blessedly, no one of us can dominate; we must learn to give space and time to others just as we wish it for ourselves. The heart of art must be in simultaneous appreciation of all points of being, as each of us struggles to be free of his/her prejudices and necessary limitations. It is not that a single language will evolve but that a posture and procedure will take over. Sing together rather than war against. An anti-weapon. A light from beneath, or from within, to illuminate in a new way the same reality which has always been here. A species with a heart. And the calm time to speak in that language rather than in the language of hostility...

SHORT RANGE & LONG RANGE: The short range is that encompassed by a person's lifetime; that is, what is an artist to do with his or her skill and vision in this lifetime. Also, the short-range encompasses this particular century. We are concerned with creating the artworks which both close and launch forward. Healing the wounds of self-inflicted incapacity. And ideological and religious blunderbussing. The long-range is the evolution of the species - how is consciousness to evolve in a hair-trigger situation. How are we to emerge from noise, moans. What would it mean to experience oneself as attached outward hanging in. How do we make meaning enlightening rather than blinding. How do we overcome the world-round fear which leads to hostility and other-hatred through self-hatred (dread). And no one is excluded.

Aware of vital precariousness, an artist brazenly witnesses to joy - we play with color and form, and reach a modicum of personal satisfaction by shaping transparent windows. Mail-art is the art of window-opening, a reminder to one's fellow artist that there are many voices and visions out here which interdepend on one another. One is neither alone nor the lone avatar of reality. We are all in the landscapes which we create. We are all surrounded. We are nothing ~~but~~ a thread of consciousness interlaced with others. The appearance of standing above, the feeling of such a perspective, is what makes one an artist. This is a device, as on a sleeve of the reinforcement worn by the planet. If this device is experienced as floating, as in the transmission of art through the mails, then the mystery of the artwork cracks open. I am a wanderer amid cracks. My artlife crackles with the miracles sent round the planet by other dreamers, schemers, or workers. Dayenu. I am sufficiently aware that the powers-that-be at any moment in history attempt to control (defang) the articulation of reality around them in their own interest; the proper tactic, I think, is to elude these powers by openness. The one thing that they cannot control is the energetic flow of the multiplicity of humankind moving in generosity. The exchange of art through the mails is presently remarkable because it is the exchange without reward of what the societies would like to control and market, to value in their way under their auspices. The longer we eschew these methods of material commodities, the stronger we will be. Going. Finally, and I must stop because I hear too much of my own voice, what strikes me as equally amazing about mail-art is that each of us has become a good reader of art. By exchanging openly with one another across the peculiar self-imposed boundaries of nations etc., we are enabling ourselves to become sensitive receivers of messages from others. A remarkable achievement. If you have read this far, you have already opened yourself to my meanings much more than is normally the case in mainstream society. Language has a deceptive appearance of meaningfulness which actually belies the case. All is idiosyncratic (despite what the scientists may think or hope to achieve!). At the same time, all is similar; we identify with any and all other members of the human species, from hated enemies to closest friends simultaneously. Amazing. Through one another as artists, having made an arbitrary choice to participate in the delight of witnessing, we open up our window on the human condition very concretely, for each of us has decided, at the same time, to hold to our individual visions as true while trying to reach outward to support and play with others.

DAVID COPE

Songs from the High Ground

110

fr betty n

